1	2	3	4
Delhi	3789	3309	2143
Punjab	3551	1897	1836
Haryana	3180	2952	1285
Chandigarh	187	156	153
Jammu & Kashmir	630	2002	848
Himachal Pradesh	1103	893	368
Rajasthan	12835	7560	6395
Gujarat	4170	5928	5408
Maharashtra	13373	9115	8056
Daman & Diu	13	10	57
Goa	216	161	98
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	24	46	12
Madhya Pradesh	6808	6072	6614
Andhra Pradesh	6260	12461	11841
Karnataka	4342	5416	4400
Lakshadweep	0	0	1
Tamil Nadu	11408	11602	9959
Kerala	10074	9017	11144
Pondicherry	770	1052	186
Total	306221	304235	249530

Demands of Beedi workers

*168. DR. ALLADI P RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Beedi workers of the country owing allegiance to all the major central trade unions took out a protest procession in New Delhi on the 27th November, 2001 in support of their demands;

(b) if so, what are their demands; and

(c) what is Government's reponse thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The main demands include uniform minimum wages for beedi

workers throughout the country, abolition of contract and sub-contract system in beedi making, supply of sufficient quantity of raw materials to the beedi rollers, issue of identity cards and log books to all beedi workers including home based women workers, withdrawal of exemption given to unbranded beedis in excise duty, withdrawal of concession given to mini cigarettes in excise duty, equal pay for women workers at par with men, withdrawal of 100% FDI from cigarette Multi National Companies (MNCs) and withdrawal of excise concession given to MNCs in North East Areas and pressurizing of America to lift the ban on export of Indian beedis.

(c) Such demands have been made in the past as well by and on behalf of associations of beedi workers. The present position in regard to each of these is as under.

Under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, State Governments are the appropriate Governments to fix and revise minimum wages for beedi making applicable equally to male and female workers and this is being done by them from time to time.

The Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 meant to protect beedi workers from exploitation of the employers empowers the State Governments to frame rules in regard to various matters including the manner in which the sorting or rejection of beedis is done and maximum limit of the percentage of the rejection of beedis, distribution of raw materials, settlement of disputes etc. Implementation of the above Act and Rules thereunder is done by the State Governments.

Withdrawal of exemption given to unbranded beedis on excise duty was not found feasible due to administrative reasons. Excise duty on minicigarettes has been increased from Rs. 100/-per thousand in 1998-99 to Rs. 135/-per thousand in 2001-2002 whereas duty on beedi has been raised from Rs. 6/- per thousand to Rs. 7/- per thousand during this period. The exemption in excise given in North East areas has been withdrawn in January, 2001.

The existing practice of the Government is not to permit FDI in tobacco sector.

The matter relating to ban imposed by USA on export of Indian

beedis has already been taken up by the Government with the US authorities.

Closure of SSIS

*169. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the Small Scale Industries closed during the last three years;

(b) the number of workers rendered jobless as a result thereof;

(c) the money of the banks and other financial institutions blocked as a result thereof; and

(d) whether Government have any plan to assist this sector; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The information on closed units is not maintained centrally. However, the Reserve Bank of the India (RBI) compiles data on sick SSIs financed by scheduled commercial banks. As per the data compiled by the RBI, the number of sick SSI units at the end of March 1999, March 2000 and March 2001 was 306221, 304235 and 249630, respectively. The outstanding bank credit in these units at the end of March 1999, March 2000 and March 2001 was Rs. 4313.48 crores, Rs. 4608.43 crores and Rs. 4505.54 crores, respectively.

(d) The Government is fully seized of the incidence of industrial sickness among SSI units and has taken various measures to facilitate timely identification and rehabilitation of potentially viable sick units, which *inter-alia* include institutional mechanism in the form of State-level Inter-Institutional Committees (SLIICs), Special Rehabilitation Cells in banks and State Financial Institutions, and elaborate guidelines issued by the RBI for extending rehabilitation assistance to eligible units. Based on the recommendations of the Working Group constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri S.S. Kohli, the then Chairman of Indian Banks' Association, the RBI has drawn up revised guidelines for rehabilitation of sick SSI units, which include *inter-alia* change in the definition of sick SSI units, norms for